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SECTION TWO.

JAPAN AND ITS PEOPLE: BY WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN

Mr. Bryan's Impressions of the Venerated Mountain, Fuji Yama — Evidences of Remarkable Industry.

The eyes of the world are on Japan. No other nation has ever made such progress in the same length of time, and at no time in her history has Japan enjoyed greater prestige than she enjoys just now; and, it may be added, at no time has she had to face greater problems than those which now confront her.

We were fortunate in the time of our arrival. Baron Komura, the returning peace commissioner, returned two days later; the naval review celebrating the new Anglo-Japanese alliance took place in Yokohama harbor a week afterward, and this was followed next day by the reception of Admiral Togo at Tokio. These were important events, and they gave a visitor an extraordinary opportunity to see the people en masse. In this article I shall deal in a general way with Japan and her people, leaving for future articles her history, her government, her politics, her industries, her art, her education and her religions.

The term Japan is a collective title applied to four large islands, that is, Honshu, Kyushu, Shikoku, Hokkaido, and about 600 smaller ones. Formosa and the islands immediately adjoining it are not generally included, although since the Chinese war they belong to Japan.

Japan extends in the shape of a crescent, curving toward the east, from 50 north latitude and 156 east longitude to 21 degrees north latitude and 119 east longitude. The area is a little less than 160,000 square miles, more than half of which is on the island of Honshu. The coast line is broken by numerous bays furnishing commodious harbors, the most important of which are at Yokohamo, Osaka, Kobe, Nagasaki, Kogoshima and Hakodate. The islands are so mountainous that only about one-twelfth the area is capable of cultivation. Although Formosa has a mountain, Mt Nlitaka (sometimes called Mt. Morrison) which is 2,000 feet higher, Fujiyama is the highest mountain in Japan proper. It reaches a height of 12,365 feet.

Fuji (Yama is the Japanese word for mountain) is called the Sacred mountain, and is an object of veneration among the Japanese. And well it may be, for it is doubtful if there is on earth a more symmetrical mountain approaching it in height. Rising in the shape of a perfect cone, with its summit crowned with snow throughout nearly the entire year, and visible from sea level, it is one of the most sublime of all the works of nature. Mt. Ranier, as they say at Seattle, or Tacoma, as it is called in the city of that name, and Popocatapetl, near Mexico's capital, are the nearest approach to Fuji, so far as the writer's observation goes. Pictures of Fuji are to be found on everything; they are printed on silk, embroidered on screens, worked on velvet, carved in wood and wrought in bronze and stone. We saw it from Lake Hakone, a beautiful sheet of water some 3,000 feet above the ocean. The foothills which surround the lake seem to open at one point in order to give a more extended view of the sloping sides of this sleeping giant.

And speaking of Hakone, it is one of the beauty spots of Japan. On an island in this lake is the summer home of the crown prince. Hakone is reached by a six-mile ride from Miyanoshita, a picturesque little village some sixty miles west of Yokohama. There are here hot springs and all the delights of a mountain retreat. One of the best modern hotels in Japan, the Fujiya, is located here, and one of the earliest guests was General Grant when he made his famous tour around the world. The road from the hotel to Hakone leads by foaming mountain streams, through closely cultivated valleys and over a range from which the coast line can be seen.

Nikko, about 100 miles north of Tokio, and Nara, about thirty miles from Kyoto, are also noted for their natural scenery, but as these places are even more renowned because of the temples located there, they will be described later. The inland sea which separates the larger islands of Japan, and is itself studded with smaller islands, adds interest to the travel from port to port. Many of these islands are inhabited, and the tiny fields which perch upon their sides give evidence of an ever present thrift. Some of the islands are barren peaks jutting a few hundred feet above the waves, while some are so tiny as to look like haystacks in a submerged meadow.

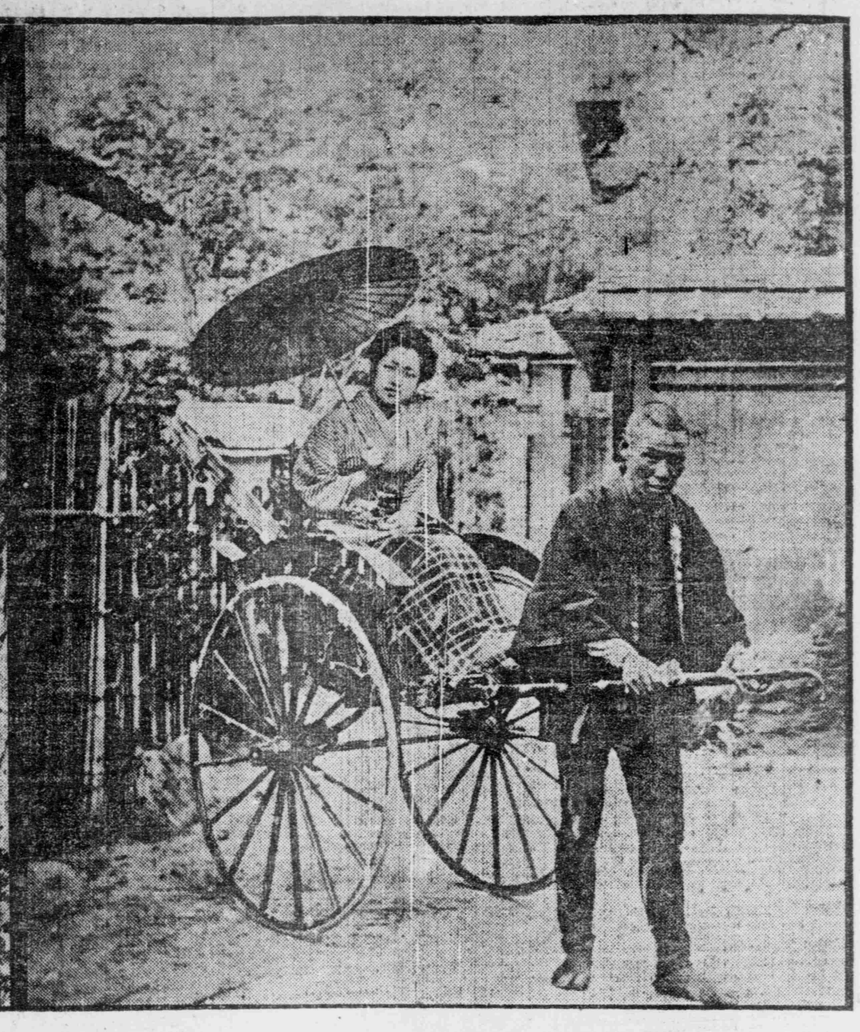
All over Japan one is impressed with the patient industry of the people. If the Hollanders have reclaimed the ocean bed, the people of Japan have encroached upon the mountains. They have broadened the valleys and terraced the hillsides. Often the diminutive fields are held in place by stone walls, while the different levels are furnished with an abundance of water from the short but numerous rivers.

The climate is very much diversified, ranging from almost tropical heat in Formosa to arctic cold in the northern islands; thus Japan can produce almost every kind of food. Her population in 1903 was estimated at nearly 47,900,000, an increase of about 13,500,000 since 1873. While Tokio has a population of nearly 1,500,000, Osaka a population of nearly 1,000,000; Kyoto, 350,000; Yokohama, 300,000, and Kobe and Nagoya about the same, besides many large cities of less size, still a large majority of the population is rural, and the farming communities have a decided preponderance of the federal congress, or diet. The population, however, is increasing more rapidly in the cities than in the country.

The stature of the Japanese is below that of the citizen of the United States and northern Europe. The average height of the men in the army is about five feet two inches, and the average weight between 120 and 130 pounds. It looks like burlesque opera to see, as one does occasionally, two or three little Japanese soldiers guarding a group of big, burly Russian prisoners.

The opinion is quite general that the habit which the Japanese form from infancy of sitting on the floor with their feet under them tends to shorten the lower limbs. In all the schools the children are now required to sit upon benches, and whether from this cause or some other, the average height of the males, as shown by yearly medical examination, is gradually increasing. Although undersize, the people are sturdy and muscular, and have the appearance of robust health. In color they display all shades of brown, from a very light to a very dark. While the oblique eye is common, it is by no means universal.

Common Method of Transportation.



Jinrikisha, a Popular Conveyance.

The conveyance which is most popular is the jinrikisha, a narrow-seated, two-wheeled top buggy, with shafts joined with a crosspiece at the end. These are drawn by "rikisha men," of whom there are several hundred thousand in the empire. The "rikisha" was invented by a Methodist missionary some thirty years ago, and at once sprang into popularity. When the passenger is much above the average weight, or when the journey is over a hilly road, a pusher is employed, and in extraordinary cases two pushers. It is astonishing what speed these men can make. One of the governors informed me that rikisha men would sometimes cover seventy-five miles of level road in a day. They will take up a slow trot and travel for several miles without a break. We had occasion to go to a village fifteen miles from Kagoshima, and crossed a low mountain range of perhaps 2,000 feet. The trip each way occupied about four hours; each rikisha had two pushers, and the men had three hours' rest at noon. They felt so fresh at the end of the trip that they came an hour later to take us to a dinner engagement. In the mountainous regions the chair and kago take the place of the rikisha. The chair rests on two bamboo poles, and is carried by four men; the kago is suspended from one pole, like a swinging hammock, and is carried by two. Of the two, the chair is much the more comfortable for the tourist. The basha is a small one-horse omnibus which will hold four or six small people; it is used as a sort of stage between villages. A large part of the hauling of merchandise is done by men, horses being rarely seen. In fact, in some of the cities there are more oxen than horses, and many of them wear sandals to protect their hoofs from the hard pavement. The lighter burdens are carried in buckets or baskets, suspended from either end of a pole and balanced upon the shoulder.

In the country the demand for land is so great that most of the roads are too narrow for any other vehicle than a handcart. The highways connecting the cities and principal towns, however, are of good width, and substantially constructed and well drained, and have massive stone bridges spanning the streams.

The clothing of the men presents an interesting variety. In official circles the European and American dress prevails. The silk hat and Prince Albert coat are in evidence at all-day functions, and the dress suit at evening parties. The western style of dress is also worn by many business men, professional men and soldiers, and by students after they reach the middle school, which corresponds to our high school. The change is taking place more rapidly among the young than among the adults, and is more marked in the city than in the country. In one of the primary schools of Kyoto I noticed that more than half of the children gave evidence of the transition in dress. The change is also more noticeable in the seaport cities than in the interior. At Kyoto the audience wore the native dress, and all were seated on mats on the floor, while the next night at Osaka all sat on chairs, and nearly all wore the American dress. At the Osaka meeting some forty Japanese young ladies from the Congregational college sang "My Country, 'Tis of Thee," in English.

The shopkeepers and clerks generally wear the native clothing, which consists of a divided skirt and a short kimono held in place by a sash. The laboring men wear loose knee breeches and a shirt in warm weather; in cold weather they wear tight-fitting breeches that reach to the ankles, and a loose coat. In the country the summer clothing is even more scanty. I saw a number of men working in the field with nothing on but a cloth about the loins, and it was early in November, when I found a light overcoat comfortable.

A pipe in a wooden case and a tobacco pouch are often carried in the belt or sash, for smoking is almost universal among both men and women.

Considerable latitude is allowed in footwear. The leather shoe has kept pace with the coat and vest, but where the native dress is worn the sandal is almost always used. Among the well-to-do the foot is encased in a short sock made of white cotton cloth, which is kept scrupulously clean. The sock has a separate division for the great toe, the sandal being held upon the foot by a cord which runs between the first and second toes, and dividing fastens on either side of the sandal. These sandals are of wood and rest upon two blocks of an inch or more high, the front one sloping toward the toe. The sandal hangs loosely upon the foot and drags upon the pavement with each step. The noise made by a crowd at a railroad station rises above the roar of the train. In muddy weather a higher sandal is used, which raises the feet three or four inches from the ground, and the wearers stalk about as if on stilts. The day laborers wear a cheaper sandal made of woven rope or straw. The footwear above described comes down from time immemorial, but there is coming into use among the 'rikisha men a modern kind of footwear, which is a compromise between the new and the old. It is a dark cloth, low-topped gaiter, with a rubber sole and no heel. These have the separate pocket for the great toe. The sandals are left at the door. After taking cold twice, I procured a pair of felt slippers and carried them with me, and the other members of the family did likewise. At public meetings in Japanese halls the same custom is followed, the sandals being checked at the door as hats and wraps are in our country. On approaching a meeting place the speaker can form some estimate of the size of the audience by the size of the piles of sandals on the outside.

The women still retain the primitive dress. About 1884 an attempt was made by the ladies of the court to adopt the European dress, and quite a number of women in official circles purchased gowns in London, Paris and the United States, in spite of the protests of their sisters abroad. (Mrs. Cleveland joined in a written remonstrance, which was sent from the United States.) But the spell was broken in a very few months, and the women outside of the court circles returned to the simpler and more becoming native garb. It is not necessary to enter into details regarding the female toilet, as the magazines have made the world familiar with the wide sleeves, loose-fitting kimono, with its convenient pockets. The children wear bright colors, but the adults adopt more quiet shades.

The shape of the garment never changes, but the color does. This season gray has been the correct shade. Feminine pride shows itself in the obi, a broad sash or belt tied in a very stiff and incomprehensible bow at the back. The material used for the obi is often bright in color and of rich and expensive brocades. A wooden disc is often concealed within the bow of the obi t keep it in shape, and also to brace the back. Two neck cloths are usually worn, folded inside the kimono to protect the bare throat. These harmonize with the obi in color and give a dainty finish to the costume. As the kimono is quite narrow in the skirt, the women take very short steps. This short step, coupled with the dragging of the sandals, makes the women's gait quite unlike the free stride of the American woman. In the middle and higher schools the girls wear a plaited skirt over the kimono. These are uniform for each school, and wine color is the shade now prevailing. The men and women of the same class year practically the same kind of shoes.

Next to obi, the hair receives the greatest attention, and it is certainly arranged with elaborate care. The process is so complicated that a hair dresser is employed once or twice a week, and beetle's oil is used in many instances to make the hair smooth and glossy. At night the Japanese women place a very hard round cushion under the neck in order to keep the hair from becoming disarranged. The stores now have for sale air pillows, which are more comfortable than the wooden ones formerly used. The vexing question of millinery is settled by dispensing with hats entirely. Even among the poorer men the hat is seldom used.

More interesting in appearance than either the men or women are the children—and I may add that there is no evidence of race suicide in Japan. They are to be seen everywhere, and a good-natured lot they are. The babies are carried on the back of the mother, or an older child, and it is not unusual to see the baby fast asleep while the bearer goes about her work. Of the tens of thousands of babies we have seen, scarcely a half dozen have been crying. The younger children sometimes have the lower part of the head shaved, leaving a cap of long hair on the crown of the head. Occasionally a spot is shaved in the center of this cap. After seeing the children on the streets, one can better appreciate the Japanese dolls which look so strange to American children.

Cleanliness is the passion of the Japanese. The daily bath is a matter of routine, and among the middle classes there are probably more who go above this average than below. It is said that in the city of Tokio there are over 1,100 public baths, and it is estimated that 500,000 baths are taken daily at these places. The usual charge is one and a quarter cents (in our money) for adults, and one cent for children. One enthusiastic admirer of Japan declares that a Japanese boy, coming unexpectedly into the possession of a few cents, will be more apt to spend it on a bath than on something to eat or drink. The private houses have baths wherever the owners can afford them. The bathtub is made like a barrel, sometimes of stone, more often of wood, and is sunk below the level of the floor. The favorite temperature is 110 degrees, and in the winter time the bathtub often takes the place of a stove. In fact, at the hot springs people have been known to remain in the bath for days at a time. I do not vouch for the statement, but Basil H. Chamberlain in his book entitled "Things Japanese," says that when he was at one of these hot springs "the caretaker of the establishment, a hale old man of eighty, used to stay in the bath during the entire winter." Until recently the men and women bathed promiscuously in the public baths; occasionally, but not always, a string separated the bathers. Now different apartments must be provided.

The Japanese are a very polite people. They have often been likened to the French in this respect—the French done in bronze, so to speak. They bow very low, and in exchanging salutations and farewells sometimes bow several times. When the parties are seated on the floor, they rise to the knees and bow the head to the floor. Servants also when they bring food to those who are seated on the floor, drop upon their knees, and, bowing, present the tray.

In speaking of the people, I desire to emphasize one conclusion that has been drawn from my observation here, viz., that I have never seen a more quiet, orderly or self-restrained people. I have visited all of the larger cities and several of the smaller ones, in all parts of the islands; have mingled in the crowds that assembled at Tokio and at Yokohama at the time of the reception to Togo, and during the naval review; have ridden through the streets in daytime and at night, and have walked when the entire street was a mass of humanity. I have not seen one drunken native or witnessed a fight or altercation of any kind. This is the more remarkable when it is remembered that these have been gala days, when the entire population turned out to display its patriotism and to enjoy a vacation.

Noisy Babies Almost Unknown —Promiscuous Bathing — Curious Houses—No Bedsteads, Tables or Chairs.

The Japanese house deserves a somewhat extended description. It is built of wood, is one story in height, unpainted, and has a thatched or a tile roof. The thatched roof is cheaper, but far less durable. Some of the temples and palaces have a roof constructed like a thatched roof, in which the bark of the arbor vita is used in place of grass or straw. These roofs are often a foot thick, and are quite imposing. In cities most buildings are roofed with tile of a pattern which has been used for hundreds of years. Shingles are sometimes used on newer structures, but they are not nearly so large as our shingles, and instead of being fastened with nails, are held in place by wire. On the business streets the houses are generally two stories, the merchant living above the store. The public buildings are now being constructed of brick and stone, and modeled after the buildings of America and Europe. But returning to the native architecture—the house is really little more than a frame, for the dividing walls are sliding screens, and the outside walls are taken out during the day. The rooms open into each other, the hallway extending around the outside instead of going through the center. Frail sliding partitions covered with paper separate the rooms from the hall, glass being almost unknown. The floor is covered with a heavy matting two inches thick, and as these mats are of a uniform size, six feet by three, the rooms are made to fit the mats, twelve feet square being the common size. As the walls of the room are not stationary, there is no place for the hanging of pictures, although the sliding walls are often richly decorated. Such pictures as the house contains are painted on silk or paper, and are rolled up when not on exhibition. At one end of the room used for company there is generally a raised platform upon which a pot of flowers or other ornament is placed, and above this there are one or two shelves, the upper one being inclosed in sliding doors. There are no bedsteads, the beds being made upon the floor and rolled up during the day. There are no tables or chairs. There is usually a diminutive desk about a foot high upon which writing material is placed. The writing is done with a brush, and the writing case of box containing the brush, ink, etc., has furnished the lacquer industry with one of the most popular articles for ornamentation. The people sit upon cushions upon the floor and their meals are served upon trays.

Japanese food is so different from American food that it takes the visitor some time to acquire a fondness for it, more time that the tourist usually has at his disposal. With the masses rice is the staple article of diet, and it is the most palatable native dish that the foreigner finds here. The white rice raised in Japan is superior in quality to some of the rice raised in China, and the farmers are often compelled to sell the rice and buy the poorer quality. Millet, which is even cheaper, is used as a substitute for rice.

As might be expected in a seagirt land, fish, lobster, crab, shrimp, etc., take the place of meat, the fish being often served raw. As a matter of fact, it is sometimes brought to the table alive and carved in the presence of the guests. Sweet potatoes, pickled radishes, mushrooms, seaweed, barley and fruit give variety to the diet. The radishes are white and enormous in size. I saw some which were two feet long and two and a half inches in diameter. Another variety is conical in form, and six or eight inches in diameter. I heard of this kind of turnip that grows so large that two of them make a load for the small Japanese horses. The chicken is found generally thoughout the country, but is small like the fighting breeds or the Leghorns. Ducks, also, are plentiful. Milk is seldom used, except in case of sickness, and butter is almost unknown among the masses.

But the subject of food led me away from the house. No description would be complete which did not mention the little gate through which the tiny dooryard is entered; the low doorway upon which the foreigner constantly constantly bumps his head, and the little garden at the rear of the house, with its fish pond, its miniature mountains, its climbing vines and fragrant flowers. The dwarf trees are cultivated here, and they are a delight to the eye; gnarled and knotted pines two feet high and 30 to 40 years old are not uncommon. Little maple trees are seen here 50 years old and looking all of their age, but only twelve inches in height. We saw a collection of these dwarf trees several hundred in number, and one could almost imagine himself transported into the home of the brownies. Some of these trees bear fruit ludicrously large for the size of the tree. The houses are heated by charcoal fires in open urns or braziers, but an American would not be satisfied with the amount of heat supplied. These braziers are moved about the room as convenience requires, and supply heat for the inevitable tea.

But I have reached the limit of this article, and must defer until the next a description of the Japanese customs as we found them in the Japanese homes which we were privileged to visit.

Influence of the Library in Municipal Progress

BY ARTHUR E. BOSTWICK,
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The functions of a public library may be divided roughly into two classes—the educational and the recreational. The professional librarian is apt to dwell upon the former; the public, which uses the library, lays more stress on the latter. That this is so would appear from the fact that more than half the books drawn from a public library are works of fiction. Of course a work of fiction may be educative in the truest sense; but on the other hand many works not classified as fiction are read purely for amusement. Probably it would be correct to say that nine-tenths of the books read by patrons of a public library are read with the purpose of obtaining recreation, and that on the other hand, nine-tenths add in some way to the education of the readers either by increasing their stock of information or by directing their thought into new channels.

This, of course, is only to say what is now beginning to be recognized everywhere—that the part played by recreation in education is very important. Physiologists are learning that the psychical features of digestion—appetite and the enjoyment of food—are quite as important to nutrition as the physical ones—the chemical composition of the food substance and the quantity and quality of the digestive juices. In like manner educators are recognizing that interest is a very important factor in the acquisition of knowledge, and that to ascertain the best way of arousing interest in his subject is a fundamental duty of the teacher.

A very large part, therefore, of what we have called the recreational part of the library's work should be so classified only from the standpoint of the reader's motive; from the point of view of the results attained it belongs in the other division.

To increase public interest in the public library so that it may attract more readers, and at the same time to make its educational content better and greater may be called the fundamental problem of the public librarian, so far as his relationship to the municipality is concerned.

That it is for the public interest to educate children at the public expense is no longer a matter of controversy. That it is equally necessary to do something to sustain and direct the desires awakened by such a training is now recognized almost everywhere. The public library is not the only agency for doing this, but it is surely one of the most important. Libraries are as old as civilization, but the tendency of the modern public library movement, which is a thing of yesterday, has always been toward bringing the man and the book closer together. All the distinctive features of the up-to-date library—its branch buildings and collections scattered thickly over our cities; its traveling libraries; the opening of its book shelves to the public, so that its stock may be freely seen and handled; its facilities for special use by children and young people; its efforts to work hand in hand with the school and the teacher—these and many others may be summed up as so many efforts in different directions to bring about this same result.

And it cannot be too strongly emphasized that such efforts are responses, whether made knowingly or not, to a public need. A common view of the recent spread of public libraries, held by people who have not come into close contact with library work, is that it has been stimulated somewhat artificially by large donations. Yet we never hear the suggestion that university growth has been similarly stimulated by gifts like those of Mr. Rockefeller to the University of Chicago. The fact is that in both cases the direction of the gifts has been influenced by a perception of the popular need, and that instead of artificially creating the demand they have followed it, and not too closely. Our universities could doubtless receive and assimilate many times the large amounts that they are annually receiving; our libraries certainly could do so. A plethora of libraries is even far less likely than a plethora of universities, for the largest part of recent library donations has been conditioned on the promise of municipal aid and support. That this support is rarely given where it should not be given is rendered probable by the fact that gifts made on such conditions are not infrequently refused on the ground of inability to meet them. We may therefore be reasonably sure that in the large number of cases where they have been accepted there has been proper consideration, and that the acceptance has been due to a belief that the needs and wishes of the public have demanded it.

In the same manner, the popularization of the library, as shown in all the directions alluded to above, is due not so much to the leadership of the librarian—although the librarian often gives himself credit for it—as to the fact that he has "kept his ear to the ground"—that he has been quick to hear the rumble of popular opinion, to discard the frivolous and capricious overtones and to attune his work to the fundamental note. For this he should certainly receive praise.

Doubtless we have not reached the end of this progress in brining together the man and the book. Of various propositions made from time to time, such as the assumption by the library of some of the functions of the bookstore, or the combination of kindergarten or museum work with its more fundamental duties, many will doubtless be discarded and some adopted; but we may hope that this will always be done in accordance with the principle that the public library is an institution for popular education.

And it is greatly to be desired that this conception of the public library should be recognized not only by the general public but especially by those who make, print and sell books. At present it is a widely prevalent opinion among publishers and booksellers that libraries injure them by furnishing facilities for the reading of books without purchase. The adoption of the present rules of the American Publishers' association regarding the maintenance of net prices has involved a reduction of discount to libraries and an average increase of cost owing to which the money voted by a municipality for the purchase of reading-matter does not go nearly as far today as it did five years ago. Booksellers are of opinion that even this is not enough, and their official organization has advocated the withdrawal of discount privileges from libraries altogether. Librarians argue that these measures are unjust, and that the net result of their labors, looking at it in a broad way, has been to encourage reading and to stimulate general interest in literature, with the result that all the industries connected with the making and distribution of books have been benefited. However this may be, it is certain that the recent decrease of the book-buying power of a dollar affects every municipality more directly, the more close its connection with the public library has become.

A book is a storage battery of ideas, and the placing of books where all who will may read them and where even those who are indifferent are induced to go where their interest may be aroused, will continue to be a factor in municipal progress that cannot be overlooked. That our large cities and towns have so freely and generously recognized this is a hopeful sign, and amid some others of less bright omen it may be dwelt upon with satisfaction.